

VZCZCXRO1560
RR RUEHCN RUEHGH RUEHLMC
DE RUEHUM #0073/01 0380923
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 070923Z FEB 08
FM AMEMBASSY ULAANBAATAR
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1900
INFO RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 1710
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5991
RUEHHI/AMEMBASSY HANOI 0112
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 0235
RUEHKL/AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR 0246
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2098
RUEHPF/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH 0075
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 0027
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 3183
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 0394
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2879
RUEHVN/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 0051
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 0056
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 0860
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 0080
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ULAANBAATAR 000073

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STATE DEPT FOR EAP/CM, PRM/ANE, EAP/K AND INR/EAP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/07/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KREF](#) [EAID](#) [SOCI](#) [MG](#)

SUBJECT: NEW MONGOLIAN SHELTER FOR DPRK REFUGEES UP AND
RUNNING

REF: ULAANBAATAR 33

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Harold Zappia for Reason 1.4 (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: North Korean refugees at a new Mongolian Border Force shelter are receiving adequate treatment while being processed for resettlement. On February 5 we visited the Nalaikh shelter, which opened in late October 2007 and is located one hour outside Ulaanbaatar. We were joined by Mongolia's UNHCR representative and escorted by two Border Force officials. The 83 DPRK refugees at the shelter, a former Army barracks, were well clothed, fed and treated, although there were only 70 bunk beds to go around. We were not permitted to speak with the refugees, most of whom passed time by watching TV, playing games or reading books. A Border Force official asked UNHCR and Post for Korean-language training for BF guards. He added that 18 DPRK refugees had recently arrived in Mongolia and were being held at one of the Border Force's two outlying shelters. He said new arrivals are increasingly in possession of substantial sums of Chinese currency. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) North Korean refugees at a new Mongolian Border Force (BF) shelter located outside of the capital are receiving adequate treatment while being processed for resettlement. Econ/Pol chief visited the Nalaikh shelter on February 5 with a UNHCR official and two Border Force officials, one of whom did not say a word. We found the 83 DPRK refugees there to be well cared for, although with only 70 bunk beds to go around, 13 slept on futon-style bedding on the ground. The shelter, a single-story, brick former Army barracks, is located just off a windswept highway that links Ulaanbaatar with a national forest. The building is heated and has

adequate plumbing, a large mess hall, a kitchen and a living room, as well as five large, communal bedrooms, each packed with Red Cross bunk beds. We were not permitted to speak with the refugees, but they were well fed and adequately clothed. Most watched TV, chatted, played dominoes or read books while a kitchen crew prepared a meal of potatoes, cabbage and garlic. A ping pong table stood idle. BF officials said there had been no disturbances at the facility since its opening in late October 2007. They said the shelter had occasional problems with electrical supply and a shortage of clothes-washing facilities, but that there were no language problems that sometimes created tensions between guards and DPRK refugees at the two outlying BF shelters (in the eastern city of Choibalsan and the southern city of Zamyn Uud). (Note/reftel: UNHCR plans to set up two new shelters in eastern Mongolia for DPRK refugees, in the towns of Halhgal and Erdenetsagaan. End Note.)

13. (SBU) A BF official said 18 North Koreans seeking resettlement had recently arrived in Mongolia and were being held at an outlying BF shelter. He added that new DPRK arrivals were more likely to be in possession of cash - "four, five, six thousand (Chinese) yuan" - than previous arrivals. The BF official added that refugees at the Nalaikh shelter were receiving daily, or near-daily, visits from the ROK Embassy staff.

14. (C) The BF official, who UNHCR Rep Och said had personally interviewed more than 2,000 DPRK refugees, asked UNHCR and Econ/Pol chief for Korean-language training for BF guards. The BF official said the South Korean Government had stopped

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a program in which it had provided 45 days of Korean-language training to guards. He said communication is important in order to prevent misunderstandings between BF guards and DPRK refugees from erupting into disputes, adding that hunger strikes occasionally resulted from such misunderstandings. (Post is discussing the request with EAP/CM, EAP/K, PRM and Embassy Seoul).

15. (U) The BF officials did not offer any information about the recently signed Mongolia-DPRK labor agreement, which is intended to bring more than 5,000 DPRK laborers to Mongolia between 2008 and 2012.

16. (SBU) UNHCR Rep Och said a planned BF/General Intelligence Agency shelter near Ulaanbaatar remains on track for a mid-October opening. The facility will have between 100 and 120 beds.
ZAPPIA